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RR RUEHDBU RUEHLN RUEHVK RUEHYG
DE RUEHAH #0528/01 1371010
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 171010Z MAY 06
FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 7335
INFO RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 2543
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT 4955
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 1630
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 1272
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1167
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0347
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC//DHO-2/REA/NMJIC-J2//
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC//J5/RUE//
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL//CCJ2/HSE/CCJ5//

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SENSITIVE

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FOR SCA/CEN (PERRY)
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TAGS: [EAGR](#) [ETRD](#) [PGOV](#) [KFLU](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: AVIAN FLU: WHO SHARES ASSESSMENT RESULTS; WORLD
BANK TO ASSIST GOTX

REFTEL: A) ASHGABAT 385 AND PREVIOUS
B) 05 STATE 153802

Sensitive But Unclassified; Not for Internet
Distribution.

1. (SBU) SUMMARY. A WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO) AVIAN INFLUENZA PREPAREDNESS ASSESSMENT TEAM VISITED ASHGABAT APRIL 2-14 TO CONDUCT TWO SEMINARS AND ASSESS AI PREPAREDNESS AT GOTX FACILITIES. THE ASSESSMENT TEAM'S UNPUBLISHED FINDINGS, RELAYED TO EMBASSY STAFF BY WHO'S LIAISON OFFICER IN ASHGABAT, WERE THAT OBSERVED HOSPITAL STAFF HAD INADEQUATE KNOWLEDGE OF INFECTION CONTROL TECHNIQUES, AND OBSERVED LABORATORY PERSONNEL HAD POOR UNDERSTANDING OF BIOSAFETY NORMS AND INADEQUATE SAMPLE STORAGE EQUIPMENT. THE ASSESSMENT TEAM ALSO MET WITH DEPUTY CHAIRMAN FOR EDUCATION, HEALTH, SCIENCE AND CULTURE BERDIMUHAMMEDOV, WHO REQUESTED ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR AI PREPAREDNESS. BERDIMUHAMMEDOV THEN PASSED FOR CONSIDERATION A \$1 MILLION WHO AND UNICEF-DRAFTED ASSISTANCE PROPOSAL TO THE WORLD BANK RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE. BOTH SIDES REVIEWED THE PROPOSAL AT A MAY 12 MEETING, AND THE WORLD BANK AGREED TO SEND A TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ASSESSMENT TEAM TO TURKMENISTAN. END SUMMARY.

2. (SBU) A WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (WHO) AVIAN INFLUENZA PREPAREDNESS ASSESSMENT TEAM VISITED ASHGABAT APRIL 2-14 TO CONDUCT TWO SEMINARS AND ASSESS AI PREPAREDNESS AT GOTX FACILITIES. THE SEMINARS WERE ON ANIMAL-HUMAN INTERFACE FOR VETERINARY AND MEDICAL SERVICE EPIDEMIOLOGISTS AND ON INFECTION CONTROLS FOR NURSES. WHILE THE ASSESSMENT TEAM HAS NOT YET RELEASED ITS REPORT, THE WHO'S LIAISON OFFICER IN ASHGABAT REPORTED TO EMBASSY STAFF THE TEAM'S CORE FINDINGS:

-- THE TEAM REVIEWED INFECTION TRANSMISSION CONTROLS IN ASHGABAT'S INFECTIOUS DISEASE HOSPITAL AND FOUND THAT STAFF HAD INADEQUATE KNOWLEDGE OF HOW TO PREVENT

TRANSMISSION OF THE INFECTION FROM INFECTED PATIENTS.
THE TEAM RECOMMENDED TRAINING TO CORRECT THIS KNOWLEDGE
GAP.

-- THE TEAM ASSESSED TWO LABS -- ONE AT THE VETERINARY
SERVICE AND ONE AT THE ASHGABAT SANITARY AND
EPIDEMIOLOGICAL SERVICE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH (MOH).
THE TEAM FOUND THAT MOH HAD PURCHASED POLYMERASE CHAIN
REACTION (PCR) EQUIPMENT TO DIAGNOSE AI, BUT HAD NOT
TRAINED THE LAB'S STAFF ON HOW TO USE THE EQUIPMENT.
BOTH LABS HAD NEITHER BIOSAFETY CABINETS NOR
REFRIGERATORS RATED TO -20 DEGREES CELSIUS, WHICH ARE
NEEDED TO PROPERLY STORE AI SAMPLES. THE STAFF'S
UNDERSTANDING OF BIOSAFETY WAS VERY LOW, ACCORDING TO THE
TEAM, AND STAFF DID NOT OBSERVE NECESSARY BIOSAFETY
PRECAUTIONS.

-- THE MISSION ALSO VISITED A PRIVATE COMMERCIAL CHICKEN
EGG FARM IN THE ASHGABAT SUBURB OF USHELYE. THE TEAM
FOUND THAT THE FARM POSSESSED HIGH-TECH, MODERN
EQUIPMENT, STRONG VETERINARY CONTROLS, AND ALL REQUIRED
PROTECTIVE GEAR (ROBES, SHOE COVERS AND MASKS). (NOTE:
THE USHELYE FARM MAY BE ONE BELONGING TO PRESIDENT
NIYAZOV. POST EXPECTS THAT OTHER EGG FARMS ARE LESS WELL-
EQUIPPED AND HAVE POORER VETERINARY CONTROLS. END NOTE.)

13. (SBU) THE TEAM ALSO MET WITH DEPUTY CHAIRMAN FOR
EDUCATION, HEALTH, SCIENCE AND CULTURE GURBANGULY
BERDIMUHAMMEDOV TO PRESENT RECOMMENDATIONS ON IMPROVING
GOTX AI PREPAREDNESS. BERDIMUHAMMEDOV AGREED WITH THE
TEAM'S RECOMMENDATIONS, ACCORDING TO THE WHO LIAISON
OFFICER, BUT SAID THE GOTX REQUIRED ADDITIONAL FUNDS. HE

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ASKED THE LOCAL UNITED NATIONS AI COORDINATION GROUP TO
DRAFT A GOTX PROPOSAL FOR ADDITIONAL WORLD BANK
ASSISTANCE. BERDIMUHAMMEDOV THEN SIGNED AND PASSED THE
WHO- AND UNICEF-DRAFTED PROPOSAL TO THE UN RESIDENT
REPRESENTATIVE.

14. (SBU) BERDIMUHAMMEDOV AND THE WORLD BANK
REPRESENTATIVE IN TURKMENISTAN MET ON MAY 12 TO DISCUSS
THE PROPOSAL AND ALLOCATION OF ABOUT \$1 MILLION FOR
TURKMENISTAN'S AI PREPAREDNESS. BASED ON THE
DISCUSSIONS, THE WORLD BANK WILL SEND A TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE ASSESSMENT TEAM TO HELP GOTX BETTER UNDERSTAND
ITS AI PREVENTION AND RESPONSE NEEDS.

BRUSH